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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: Indonesia, Economic, MEPP, U.S., Russia,
U.S.-Spain, Congo

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¶1. Lead Stories Summary

Editorials focused on the events in Hesse and the protest against a shipment of nuclear waste. The announcement of Hesse's SPD leader not to run again as frontrunner in the upcoming state parliament elections is also the main story in today's press. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast Heute opened with a story on the protests against a nuclear waste shipment in Lower Saxony and ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with a report on the anniversary of the Kristallnacht.

¶2. (Indonesia) Execution Of Terrorists

According to Sueddeutsche Zeitung, "the Indonesian government allowed the attackers to give interviews and to spread their ideology that was full of hatred. The government in Jakarta was interested in allowing the attackers to show the face of evil to the people in order to win the people's support in this fight against terrorists. And all of a sudden everyone thought that the death penalty was appropriate. Indonesia's example shows that the 'war on terror' is the most successful when it is being waged with the means of democracy and with the support of the people by the state demonstrating in a resolute and fair way that it has the monopoly to use force, with public, quick and apolitical trials without torture, without criticized pretrial detention, and without bending the law. Maybe Indonesia has demonstrated to the world the best example of how to deal with terrorists."

Tagesspiegel and Frankfurter Rundschau opined: "The few hundred sympathizers for the terrorists overshadow the view that almost all Indonesians reject terror. They think...that the Bali bombers received their fair punishment. But apart from the highest possible punishment, we can congratulate Indonesia. A well-equipped

anti-terror unit is hunting terrorists, its tough laws are working, and the justice authorities take tough actions. Experts agree: the terror structures in Indonesia have been destroyed to such an extent that an attack like the one in Bali is no longer possible--and the people support this tough policy."

13. (Economic) Financial Crisis, Chinese Economic Program

Handelsblatt editorialized: "The absence of the 'President' of the Euro group, Jean-Paul Juncker, at the financial summit in Washington is exemplary. It shows to what extent claim and reality in European politics differ. The EU now wants to show the United States what it is able to do. Without false modesty we have heard from the European capitals that the global financial market is an America patient and it is up to Europe to supply the cure. But if the EU were really serious, it would first of all overcome its own teething troubles. It should bundle its forces and transfer power to a strong negotiating leader. Instead, five European leaders will represent Europe at the financial summit in Washington, while EU leader Barroso is allowed to sit at the side table. But the Europeans will be able to teach others a lesson in a credible way only if they are able to function well as a team. The global financial crisis has weakened the U.S. superpower, but the EU must still prove that it is able to take advantage of it."

In view of Financial Times Deutschland, "the Europeans travel to Washington with strong self-confidence and even greater expectations. According to the European will, the meeting in Washington is to give the impetus for the adoption of rules that will take into account the lessons from the financial crisis and make the world fit for the 21st century. This self-confidence is justified. But despite a convincing European presentation in the first round, it could now be faced with some setbacks in Washington.

During the G-20 meeting in Sao Paulo, the European representatives met with resistance with their proposals from the U.S. and the threshold countries. If the threshold countries implement their views, this would mean the end of the special position of the Europeans, Americans, and Japanese. But the EU countries should not shy away from conflicts with Americans and the threshold countries. The European concept to demand stricter rules and greater oversight over financial capitalism is the only convincing answer to the current situation."

According to Handelsblatt, "China has now given itself the best recommendation for its participation in the financial summit with the adoption of its economic stimulus program. China could not have expressed more obviously that it has a great interest in avoiding a deep recession of the global economy, and that it wants to have a considerable say in the restructuring of the global financial architecture. The Chinese have now made 'advance payments,' and they are likely to present immediately the bill for their role in the global economy to the Europeans and Americans. Those who take over global responsibility also want to have a say in global decisions. For China, the times are over when it sat at the side table of the G-8 meetings."

14. (MEPP) Peace Process

Berliner Zeitung observed: "Over the weekend, Hamas cancelled its participation in the peace talks. We could now say that the Islamists do not give a damn about the desperate situation of the people from Gaza. Despite the drastic reduction of missile attacks on Israel, their situation is deteriorating day by day. During the talks, Hamas should also approve an extension of President Abbas's term. The Egyptians, but also the members of the Middle East quartet, already approved such an extension. It is true that Secretary Rice buried the Annapolis process over the weekend. But all participants also agreed on a new summit in Moscow early next year, but before, there should be elections in the Palestinian territory. This summit has now been scheduled without showing consideration for the election and whether a Hamas politician could be the next Palestinian president."

15. (U.S.) Aftermath Of U.S. Elections

Financial Times Deutschland opined: "Like a rubber doll with which children tend to play, everyone wants to bend and shape President-elect Obama according to his own views. This increasing

pressure makes clear one thing: the coming president will soon have to show his true colors in foreign policy, probably earlier than he would like. But for everyone who hopes for a turnabout after eight years of George W. Bush, this moment will certainly result in a disappointment. Even if he wanted to, Obama could not pursue a totally different policy towards Iraq, Iran or Russia. Of course, he could send signals such as the closure of Guantanamo, but those in Europe who pin their hopes on profound changes must show patience and should not overburden Obama with expectations. All indications are that the new president will demonstrate a different style in foreign policy and will ask the partner countries for greater cooperation. This is a beginning but more cannot be expected right now."

16. (Russia) Foreign Policy, Accident On Nuclear Submarine

Sueddeutsche Zeitung judged: "The West can't figure President Medvedev out. This is bad because a stage is emerging in which important issues need to be resolved with Russia's support. But, what does Medvedev want? The dilemma of the Kremlin leader, and the West should understand this, is that former president Putin still has a say. Rarely before has the authority of a Russian state leader been standing on such a shaky ground. Medvedev still does not have the power base which all his predecessors had before coming to power. That is why his foreign policy messages are primarily domestic messages, for the greatest pressure comes from home. His goals are ambitious, but now of all times, the financial crisis is hitting the country and restricts the scope of action which the president really needed. But this also offers a chance for the West's relations with Russia: for the planned partnership agreement with the EU, but also for relations with the new U.S. government. Moscow, but also Brussels and Washington, should keep this in mind. In the era of globalization, no one is able to help oneself on its own. This also includes the self-confident new Russia."

Frankfurter Rundschau opined: "Dimitri Medvedev now has a chance to repair something, his predecessor was incapable of doing. When the 'Kursk' sank in 2000, Vladimir Putin allowed several days to pass before he made a statement on it and turned to the relatives of the victims. President Medvedev would now have the chance to deal in a human way with the tragedy. He must see to it that the state takes responsibility for accidents in the military, compensates relatives in an appropriate way, and does is not remain silent about the reasons for the drama."

In the view of Tagesspiegel, "the chain of accidents of Russian submarines is pointing to a big structural problem: over the past decades, Russia has invested much too little in the technical modernization of its military. Former President Putin tried for years to revive Russia as a major power, but while, during Soviet times, the spending on the military made up 20 to 25 percent of the GDP, Putin only spend less than three percent. Until today, claim and reality greatly differ. What remains is a major power rhetoric, and a great deal of unresolved technical problems."

17. (U.S.-Spain) Relations

Under the headline: "Amigos," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung argued: "Another winner of the U.S. elections is Spain's Prime Minister Zapatero. He has not outlived 10 U.S. presidents such as Fidel Castro but he has outlived one: President Bush. The fact that Spain and the United States, which pull the same strings from Afghanistan to the Balkans, will soon have friendly relations again is good news. The number 8 in the global economy deserves a seat among the big nations. But if Zapatero wants to cooperate with Obama in Latin America, a greater distance to Castro and his epigones would certainly be useful."

Berliner Zeitung observed: "Despite a the understandable diplomatic success for Spain, we must say that the financial summit in Washington will not focus on 'fondling' the Spanish soul. Spain has become a relevant global actor because the Banco de Espana has been an example of how an oversight agency can meet its duties. If the rest of the world had followed the Spanish example, we would not have an international financial crisis today and not a financial summit either. The world can learn from Spain. Spain's diplomats will take the opportunity to improve the shattered Spanish-U.S. relations. Barack Obama already promised a meeting with Zapatero."

More good news."

18. (Africa) Congo

Under the headline "Empty Promises In Congo," S|ddeutsche comments: "Eastern Congo exceeds all negative prejudices there are about Africa: War, refugees, greed, violence. The euphoria about the democratic elections two years ago has passed a long time ago.... And the international community? It stood by and watched for too long. It praised itself for funding and militarily securing the elections. But nobody really cared about what came afterwards.

Even UN peacekeepers made a bad impression because of illegal gold trade and rape, not honest service for the people. Eastern Congo does not need more peacekeepers, but it needs capable ones. Above all, the international community must exert diplomatic and financial pressure to stop this war."

Tagesspiegel describes the Congo as the "sick heart" of Africa and warns that "those who want the military to create peace will fail" like in Somalia. "The catastrophic Somalia adventure of the United States fifteen years ago should be a warning to the Europeans and the United Nations. Those who send soldiers into a conflict must be sure that they will eventually be successful. Under the current conditions, this is currently not possible in the Congo, the sick heart of Africa. In its current condition, the Congo cannot survive."

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